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# Pentagon sheds light on how West's technology ends up in Soviet weapons

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The Pentagon has released a detailed picture of one line of work that Soviet spies, such as those recently expelled by Britain, are engaged in.

That work is acquiring the West's technological secrets for use in Soviet weapons. A number of Reagan administration officials, led by Assistant Defense Secretary Richard Perle, have said for years that such "technology transfer" is a large threat to United States security.

"We now know that the scope of the Soviet effort, the investment they have made in acquiring technology information, is vastly greater than was previously believed to be the case," said Mr. Perle upon the release of a 32-page government report on the subject.

Previously the administration has released details on specific technology obtained by the Soviets, or bragged of seizures of high-tech equipment illegally bound for the USSR. The new report, however, for the first time describes the Soviet organization whose job it is to obtain such stuff.

The organization, the VPK or "Military Industrial Commission," is in essence a Sears catalog store for the Soviet high command, according to the US report.

Heads of Soviet defense industries select specific items of Western technology they would like. The VPK passes these wish lists to various Russian intelligence agencies, along with funds earmarked for the items' collection.

More than 5,000 Soviet military research projects benefit significantly from Western technology each year, claims the report.



Weinberger: the West is 'subsidizing' Soviet buildup

The USSR has learned much about airplane fire-control radar from pilfered information about the US F-18 fighter, for instance. By copying an unusual National Aeronautics and Space Administration wing design, the Soviets have developed an effective short take-off and landing aircraft, claims Assistant Secretary Perle.

Technology transfer saves the USSR about 500 million rubles annually, the equivalent of about \$1.4 billion in 1980 dollars, claims the report. A congressional source warns, however, that dollar-ruble conversions are tricky, and the actual dol-

lar value may be much less.

"We are subsidizing the military buildup of the Soviet Union," said Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger at a press conference on the report.

The US government does not take a united stand on technology transfer. Perle and other hard-liners have feuded for years with their colleagues at the Department of Commerce, who feel that the security gains of tougher export controls don't make up for the economic losses of diminished trade.

In addition, tech transfer is not a one-way street. Though the Soviets undoubtedly learn more from the West than the West learns from the Soviets, there is some reverse flow as well.

Pentagon officials heading the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), charged with research into defense against ballistic nuclear missiles, are quite proud of what they have learned from the Soviets.

In particular, USSR expertise in particle-beam research has benefited SDI. (Particle beams are rays produced by particle accelerators, familiarly known as atom smashers.)

In the 1970s, from open Soviet scientific literature, US researchers learned about something called a "radio-frequency quadropole." This device can be used to help focus certain types of particle beams.

Since that time, however, articles on particle beams and other exotic technologies that might be used for space-based missile defense have disappeared from Soviet publications, say Pentagon officials. That's a sign the Soviets have decided these technologies might well have military utility, say these officials.